

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 8-10 are all the claims pending in the application. By this Amendment, claims 15 and 16 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 1-3 and 8-10 are allowed. Applicants direct the Examiner's attention to the amendments made to claims 1, 3, 8, and 10. Applicants submit that the amended claims remain allowable.

Claim Rejections

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,651,206 to Ohki¹. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Ohki in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,092,443 to François *et al.* ("François").

Applicants do not acquiesce to these rejections. In order to expedite prosecution, however, claims 15 and 16 have been canceled. Accordingly, the rejections thereto are rendered moot.

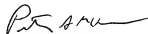
Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

¹ Although claim 16 is also listed in the statement of rejection, Applicants note that claim 16 is not rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (*see* Office Action, page 2, last paragraph and page 4, second paragraph).

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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